UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ICEF/1997/6
11 November 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

FOR ACTION

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Executive Board
First regular session 1997
20-24 January 1997
Item 14 of the provisional agenda*

PARTICIPATION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND IN THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND/WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION JOINT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH POLICY

1. At the Executive Board's third regular session of 1996, the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) informed the Board of a decision taken by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/UNFPA (decision 96/38) on 13 September 1996 (see annex I). The UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board had reaffirmed the need for close collaboration at all levels among UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) and requested that steps be taken for the UNFPA Executive Board to become a member of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy (JCHP). The Board also called for UNFPA to participate, as an observer, in the next meeting of JCHP in January 1997.

2. In a letter dated 17 September 1996 (see annex II), Ms. Annette des Iles (Trinidad and Tobago), President of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, requested the assistance of Mr. Ion Gorita (Romania), President of the UNICEF Executive Board, in bringing the matter to the attention of the UNICEF Board and, in particular, facilitating implementation of decision 96/38. Following a short discussion on this item at the third regular session, in which several delegations expressed the desire to consult with their capitals, the Executive Board agreed to address the issue at the present session.

3. With full recognition of the prerogatives of the two governing bodies, subsequent discussions between the Director-General of WHO and the Executive Director of UNICEF led to agreement on proposed arrangements for submission to the UNICEF and WHO Executive Boards, respectively. These were transmitted to the Executive Director of UNFPA in a joint letter dated 25 October (see annex III).

* E/ICEF/1997/2.

4. On 4 November, the UNFPA Executive Director responded to the joint letter, taking note of the proposed arrangements and undertaking to inform the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board accordingly (see annex IV). On 6 November, the President of the UNICEF Executive Board informed the President of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board of the proposed arrangements to be submitted to the UNICEF and WHO Executive Boards in January 1997 (see annex V).

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

5. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board adopt the following recommendation:

The Executive Board,

Having reviewed the report "Participation of the Executive Board of the United Nations Population Fund in the United Nations Children's Fund/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy" (E/ICEF/1997/6),

Requests:

(a) That the agenda of the meeting of JCHP be organized in such a way that matters of direct reference to UNFPA are clustered together. This selective management of the agenda would enable UNFPA to organize the attendance of its Executive Board members and staff in the most economical and effective way that it might choose to adopt;

(b) That the present UNICEF/WHO JCHP be known as the UNFPA/UNICEF/WHO Coordinating Committee on Health and its terms of reference be amended accordingly.

FILE NAME: DECISION 96/38
13 September 1996 5:37pm

Annex I

96/38. Coordination in health policy and programming

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes the oral report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund on coordination in health policy and programming;

2. Reaffirms the need for close collaboration at all levels among the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Population Fund in the area of health policy and programming, including reproductive health, and invites the UNICEF-WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy to ensure that the United Nations Population Fund can participate in the meetings of the Joint Committee on Health Policy;

3. Requests the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund, with the assistance of the secretariat of the United Nations Population Fund, to ascertain the views of the Executive Boards of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund on possible membership of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund in the Joint Committee on Health Policy;

4. Requests the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund to take appropriate action to enable the United Nations Population Fund secretariat to participate as an observer in the Joint Committee on Health Policy in January 1997;

5. Also requests the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board at its second regular session 1997 on the observations made in the Joint Committee on Health Policy and to make further recommendations as appropriate on the action needed for the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and, the United Nations Population Fund to obtain full membership.

13 September 1996

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Annex II

17 September 1996

Dear Mr. President,

I have the honour to write to you in my capacity as President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund with reference to decision 96/38, which was adopted by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board at its third regular session of 1996. A copy of the decision is attached for your information.

Decision 96/38, inter alia, reaffirms the need for close collaboration at all levels among UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA in the area of health policy and programming, including reproductive health, and invites the UNICEF-WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy to ensure that UNFPA can participate in the meetings of the Joint Committee on Health Policy (para. 2).

The decision requests that I, as President of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, ascertain the views of the Executive Boards of WHO and UNICEF on possible membership of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board in the Joint Committee on Health Policy (para. 3). It further requests that I take appropriate action to enable the UNFPA secretariat to participate as an observer in the Joint Committee on Health Policy (para.4).

It is through this letter that I seek to carry out the requests contained in decision 96/38. I would therefore very much appreciate your assistance in bringing this decision to the attention of your Executive Board and, in particular, in facilitating the implementation of paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of decision 96/38.

It may be useful in your deliberations to note that the members of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board generally expressed strong support for the Board becoming a member of the Joint Committee on Health Policy.

H.E. M. Ion Gorita,
President, Executive Board of UNICEF,
c/o Permanent Mission of Romania
to the United Nations

c.c. Miss Cecilia Lotse
Secretary of the Executive Board of UNICEF

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Annex II (continued)

The Executive Board of UNDP and UNFPA stands ready to provide any information and/or support you may need in these endeavours.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Annette des Iles
President
Executive Board of the United Nations
Development Programme and the United
Nations Population Fund

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTE

Annex III

Téléphone Central/Exchange: 791 21 11
Direct: 791 3364

In reply please refer to
Prière de rappeler la: FRH:P13/522/22

Your reference:
Votre reference:

Dr Nafis Sadik
Executive Director
United Nations Population Fund
220 East. 42nd Street
New York. N.Y. 10017
USA

October 1996

Dear Dr Sadik.

We refer to the discussions that took place at the UNFPA Executive Board, in the context of interagency coordination, concerning the participation of the UNFPA Executive Board in the WHO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Health Policy, and as referred to in your letter of 16 September 1996.

We attach great importance to coordination within the United Nations system. In this regard, we fully share the concern that both you, yourself, and the Board members have expressed regarding the need to ensure close collaboration, and coordinated action, between UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO. We look forward to working more closely with UNFPA on issues related to the work of the three agencies.

In recent meetings, we have had an opportunity to review jointly the question of UNFPA membership in the JCHP. In so doing we took full account of the views expressed by the members of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board on 12 September 1996, and the views of the UNICEF Executive Board on 18 September 1996. We also recalled the contents of your letter to us in November 1995.

Recognizing the prerogatives of the Governing Bodies of our organizations, we plan to submit to our respective Executive Boards the following proposed arrangements:

cc: The Director, UNFPA Liaison Office for Europe, Geneva Executive Centre, Palais des Nations, 1211 Genève 10

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Dr Nafis Sadik
Executive Director
United Nations Population Fund. New York

FRH-P13/522/22

- The agenda of the meeting of the Committee would be organized in such a way that matters of direct reference to UNFPA were clustered together. This selective management of the agenda would enable UNFPA to organize the attendance of its Board members and staff in the most economical and effective way it might wish to adopt.

- The present UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy would be known as the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health and its terms of reference would be amended accordingly.

The next meeting of the (present) JCHP is scheduled for May 1997. The Executive Boards of all three organizations will meet before that time and, on approval by our respective Boards, the new arrangements could be set in place for the first meeting of the new Committee in May 1997.

We trust that you will find these proposals in line with the expectations of your Board, and of yourself. An early response from you would be appreciated so that matters can be set in motion without delay.

We look forward to fully cooperating with you in pursuit of our common goals.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Bellamy
Executive Director
UNICEF

Hiroshi Nakajima, M.D., Ph.D.
Director-General
WHO

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Annex IV

UNFPA FNUAP
United Nations Population Fund
Fonds des Nations Unies pour la population

220 East 42nd Street
New York, New York 10017
Cable: UNFPA New York
Telex: 422031 or 422038
Fax: (212) 297-4911
Telephone: (212) 297-5122

File No : _____

4 November 1996

Dear Ms. Bellamy and Dr. Nakajima,

Thank you for your letter of October 1996, reference FRH: P13/522/22, concerning the Joint Committee on Health Policy.

I am pleased that you agree that coordination at the policy level is important among our three organizations and I am glad that you welcome the proposal for UNFPA Executive Board to become a member of the WHO/UNICEF Joint Committee on Health Policy.

I take note of your suggestions for the proposed arrangements; namely the preparation of the agenda so that matters of direct reference to UNFPA are clustered together, the renaming of the committee as **"UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health"** and the amending of its terms of reference accordingly.

I also note that the next meeting of the JCHP is scheduled for May 1997, and that the Executive Boards of our respective organizations will meet before that time. As you have suggested, it is expected that upon approval by our respective Boards, the new arrangements can then be set in place for the first meeting of the new Committee in May 1997.

We will proceed to immediately inform the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board accordingly. We look very much forward to cooperating closely with UNICEF and WHO on this new Coordinating Committee on Health.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Nafis Sadik
Executive Director
and Under-Secretary-General

Ms. Carol Bellamy
Executive Director
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
3 United Nations Plaza, Room H-1380
New York, New York 10017

Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima
Director-General
World Health Organization (WHO)
CH-1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland

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unicef

United Nations Children's Fund
Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance
Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia

3 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017
212 326-7000
Telex: 175989

Annex V

CF/EB/1996/085
6 November 1996

Dear Mme. President,

I have the pleasure to refer to your letter of 17 October 1996 regarding the participation of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as an active participant at the next regular session in 1997 of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy (JCHP) and, eventually, full membership on the Committee.

I wish to inform you that the Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA addressed the UNICEF Executive Board on this subject during its third regular session of 16-19 September, 1996. Several delegations expressed the desire to consult with their capitals. In light of the fact that the date of the JCHP meeting had been postponed from January to May of 1997, it was agreed that the issue would be addressed at the first regular session of 1997 (20-24 January).

In the meantime, a letter addressed to the Executive Director of UNFPA under the joint signatures of the Director General of WHO and the Executive Director of UNICEF has been drafted by the two secretariats for approval by the respective Executive Boards of WHO and UNICEF in January 1997.

I remain, dear Mme. President,
Yours sincerely,

Ian Gorita
President
Executive Board of UNICEF

H.E. Mme. Annette des Iles
President
Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme and
the United Nations Population Fund

cc: Ms. Cecilia Lotse
Secretary of the UNICEF Executive Board